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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 000091

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN: REGIONAL SECURITY SUPPORT - AFGHANISTAN

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This cable is part 1 of 5 in a series on Jordan's regional security contributions and military support.

¶2. (C) SUMMARY: Jordan has been exceptionally responsive to USG requests for military contributions in support of regional and international security priorities. In Afghanistan, Jordan has responded with significant ground and Special Operations Forces (SOF). These forces are now engaged in combat and security operations alongside Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) units. Deployments of this magnitude are a first for Jordan. While the financial requirements of sustaining large numbers of forces abroad could hamper Jordan's ability to maintain its contributions, Jordan is otherwise prepared to continue its deployments and seek new ways to support the planned surge of U.S. forces. END SUMMARY.

#### Force Deployments in Afghanistan

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¶3. (C) In July 2009, Jordan deployed a 720 person infantry battalion to Logar Province, Afghanistan, for an expected six month deployment. The battalion, named Task Force 222 (TF222), conducted security operations with U.S. Task Force Spartan (3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division). Originally deployed to support elections in the province, the battalion now conducts routine security operations. Jordan's Chief of Defense has approved a second rotation (TF222-Bravo) which is scheduled to deploy on January 9, 2010. TF 222-Bravo will be partnered with the 173d Airborne Brigade at Forward Operating Base Shank.

¶4. (C) Jordan included two rotary-wing aviators from the Prince Hashim Royal Brigade with their TF222 deployment to observe U.S. rotary-wing aviation missions. The goal of this deployment is to build Jordan's capacity for air support of forces with an emphasis on enhancing interoperability with U.S. forces. In September 2009, Jordan deployed a second round of rotary-wing aviators, with the intent to establish routine rotations.

¶5. (C) Jordanian Special Operations Forces deployed Task Force 111 (TF111), a 111-person unit, in May 2009 to conduct combat operations with the U.S. 5th Special Forces Group, near Qalat, Afghanistan. TF111 redeployed in late August. A second iteration of the SOF unit, TF111-Bravo, deployed to Afghanistan on October 1, 2009, for an expected deployment of 6 months, establishing consistent Jordanian SOF presence in Afghanistan. Coordination is underway for the deployment of its replacement, TF111-Charlie, which will deploy to Afghanistan on February 11, 2010.

## Other Contributions for Afghanistan

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¶16. (C) Other contributions to security goals in Afghanistan include:

-- Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) operates a military field hospital in Qalat, Afghanistan. Since 2003 the hospital has treated over 750,000 patients.

-- In 2003, Jordan was one of the first countries to send demining teams to Afghanistan.

-- Jordan trained a 50-man cadre of the Afghanistan National Army Counter Terrorism force.

## Pay Entitlements Break the Bank

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¶17. (C) Although Jordan has been an eager partner in Afghanistan, limited resources are a significant constraint. TF111 and TF222 deployments have been made possible only through U.S. support, such as pre-deployment training, airlift, equipment, and billeting.

¶18. (C) A central issue is the requirement under Jordanian law that forces deployed abroad are paid a combat premium of approximately 1600 USD per month. (Note: These so-called pay entitlements have been consistently paid during Jordan's

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19-year history in UN Peacekeeping operations (PKO). Pay entitlements for PKOs were funded through the UN system. However, there is no similar mechanism when Jordan deploys independently or with coalition partners, forcing Jordan to make these payments on its own to its forces deployed in Afghanistan. End Note.)

¶19. (C) Pay entitlements are a significant element in the JAF's growing budget deficit, now estimated to be approximately 150 million USD. The pay entitlements issue nearly derailed the original deployment of TF222 and could limit the sustainability of future rotations of TF111 and TF222.

¶110. (C) Jordan has repeatedly requested assistance from the U.S. to fund its pay entitlements, a request the USG cannot fulfill. Jordan has also requested assistance from the United Arab Emirates, but so far funds have not been forthcoming.

## Jordan Wants to Do More

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¶111. (C) In meetings Jordanian officials have indicated their interest in doing more to support the mission in Afghanistan and the planned surge of U.S. forces there. In particular, both the Chairman of Defense and King Abdullah II have said that Jordan stands ready to contribute additional forces, especially if the pay entitlements issue can be solved. In addition, the King has offered to contribute two Blackhawk helicopters for special operations, an offer which is currently under review by CENTCOM.

## Comment

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¶112. (C) Jordan's Afghanistan deployments are a significant expression of support from a key Arab ally for the mission in Afghanistan. In addition, Jordan's forces are showing results. Feedback from the field indicates that the Jordanian military presence is yielding valuable engagement

with key leaders in rural areas in Afghanistan, giving these leaders a promising alternative to Taliban affiliation. In addition, the deployments are helping Jordan acquire experience and skills in a combat situation -- a critical need for a national military that has not deployed in combat in over a generation -- and improving interoperability with U.S. forces. It is clear that Jordan could do more. However, with its pay entitlements problem and military budget shortfall, financing remains a barrier.

Beecroft